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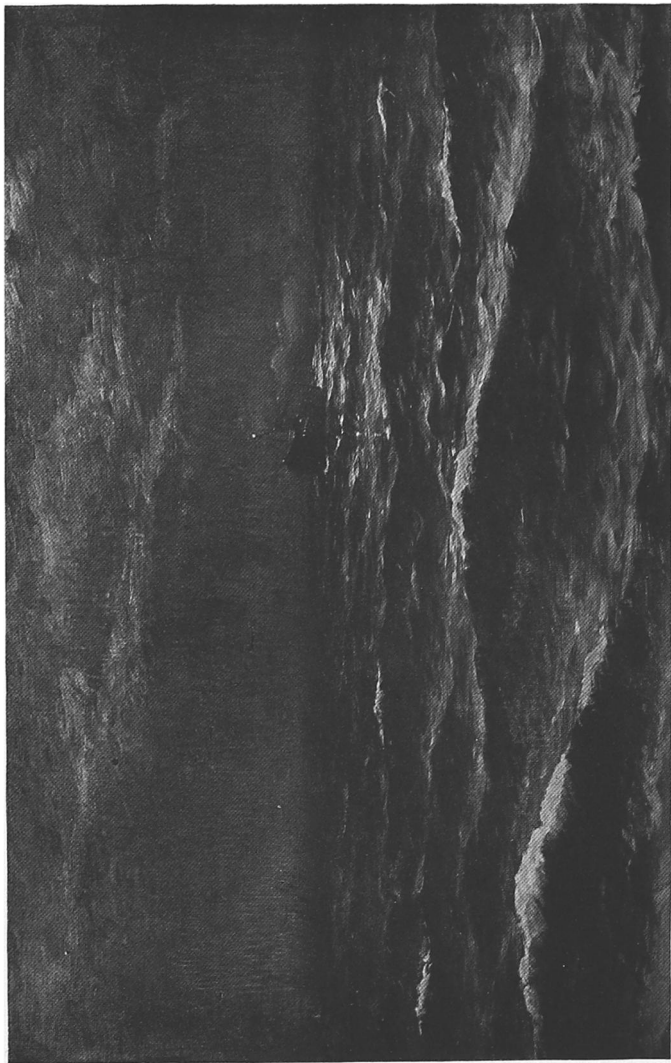
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NIGHT ON THE OCEAN  
By Edgar S. Cameron

DIAGRAPH PLATES MADE BY BARNES-CROSBY CO



# BRUSH AND PENCIL

VOL. IX

MARCH, 1902

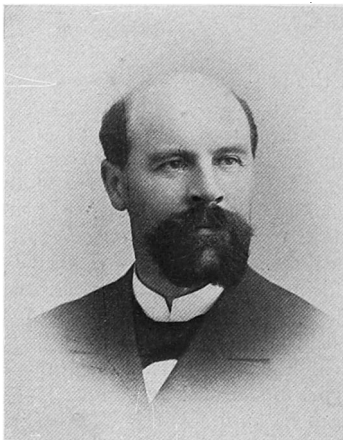
No. 6

## A FAMOUS FRENCH ARTIST, LEON MARIE JOSEPH IWILL

The influence that France and French artists have exercised on the art of America can hardly be estimated, but beyond doubt the teaching of the French studio has been an important factor in developing the characteristics of the American school of painting and also in establishing its methods. The number of American art students resident in Paris each year is far greater than would readily be supposed. It has recently been estimated that from twelve to fifteen hundred are constantly at work there.

You meet these embryo artists everywhere—at the picture galleries, on the streets and boulevards, at the cafés of the Quartier Latin. They come and go. Some stay for a longer, some for a shorter time, but they all attend one or another of the art academies, such as Julien's, Delaclone's, or Carlorossi's. The more fortunate study with special masters, and so fall more directly under their influence, while all absorb the art atmosphere with which the French capital is filled. The best known men who have been brought into contact with such surroundings are Whistler and Sargent. The latter, although born of American parents in Italy, was educated, artistically, largely in France, and has lived most of his life abroad; while the former has now practically made Paris his home.

Amongst the French artists who by their works, through their numerous pupils, and by their precept and example, have had a very wide influence upon the art of their day, should be placed Monsieur Iwill. Leon Marie Joseph Iwill, born in Paris, in 1850, was destined by his father, who was treasurer of the Chamber of Deputies, for a



M. J. IWILL  
From a Photograph



AFTER THE SQUALL  
By M. J. Iwill

civil engineer. He studied with this end in view in the Lycée Bonaparte at Paris, having for his classmate Edouard Détaillé, the now famed military painter. Unfortunately Iwill's delicate health prevented his entering the École Centrale, where engineers complete their education. After finishing his mathematical studies, he was obliged to give up all ideas of taking his degree.

The family circumstances made it necessary for him to earn his living, so he was entered, at the age of eighteen, with a leading jewelry firm and soon showed his artistic leanings and capacity by making many rare and beautiful designs. Bad health still followed him, and he became seriously ill. Just then the war with Germany was declared, and Iwill, although still weak, and in spite of the refusal on the part of his physicians to grant the necessary certificate, enlisted. He went through that terrible campaign, at first as a private soldier, and later on as a non-commissioned officer.

While at college he had studied drawing with success. He had also always been a lover of nature in her various moods, and now the sight of the superb expanse of country covered with snow, the desolation of the landscape, which he had plenty of opportunity to study during the long winter marches of 1870 and 1871, decided for him his vocation. On peace being declared he at first entered the administration bureau of the National Assembly, sitting at Versailles, of which his father had become the general secretary. He chose this work because it left him free for several hours each day, during which he worked with tremendous energy at his chosen profession, under the direction of that most excellent and well-known marine-painter (since dead), Juglet.

Finding, however, that he did not have time enough to give to



VILLAGE IN BRETAGNE  
By M. J. Iwill

his painting, and still being obliged to support himself, he, during the next three years, prepared to pass the examinations for the stenographic secretaryship to the National Assembly. This was a lucrative position, with the additional advantage of giving him three days each week as well as his mornings free. He secured this much coveted



LE CALVAIRE

By M. J. Iwill

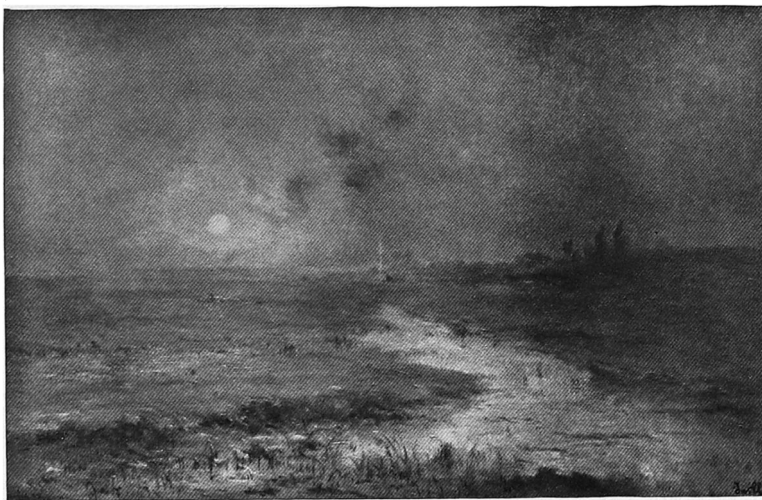
post, and the following year was transferred to a more important position in the senate.

In 1872 the French government sent him on a mission to Algiers to study the question of colonization there. His report was very exhaustive, but the questions which such a mission involved did not interest him nearly so much as the beauty of the African scenery. So while he brought back great inspiration for his art he did not further attempt the solution of this important problem.

From this time he determined to give himself up entirely to painting. Following this decision he made a journey to Brittany, where he made the acquaintance of the eminent painter, Lansyer, who became at once interested in his work. A warm friendship, with many years of study under this master, ensued.

In 1875 he offered for exhibition for the first time at the Salon of

the Société des Artistes Français picture, which was accepted by the jury and well hung. This proved a very important event for him, for his painting attracted much attention, as did also the name with which he signed it, viz., "I will." He had always observed that when an Englishman or an American was determined to succeed he usually said "I will," so the young painter, being determined to work faithfully and to accomplish great things in his art, took for his *nom*



NUIT GRISE

From Gallery of the Luxembourg

By M. J. Iwill

*de brosse* the English words "I will." At first the name was written as two distinct words, but now it is signed Iwill.

It is also a well-known fact that Monsieur Iwill had a double purpose in the choice of his name, for while bent on succeeding as an artist, he was equally bent on securing in marriage the hand of a young lady of high social position. So thinking of her and his art at the same time, he was inspired to select this forceful and picturesque pseudonym. Such is the origin of the name which has become famous, which is now found on so many beautiful works, and which before long was accepted by the young lady who became Madame Iwill.

His picture was well received. All the leading journals spoke of his work enthusiastically, and one of the most eminent writers of the day, Edmond About, devoted a whole page in praise of his methods,

in an influential art review. So, much to his surprise, the young painter found himself suddenly famous.

This first success was but the beginning of his fame. Honor followed honor. He was made *Hors Concours*, was awarded medals at two French expositions, was elected

*Chevalier* of the Legion of Honor, received the medal of honor at the Lyons Exposition, and was made an officer of the Academy. These are some of the greatest honors France has to bestow on her distinguished citizens.

His pictures are to be found in most of the more important French and foreign galleries. The state has recognized the value of his work, not only by bestowing on him medals, decorations, and other honors, but also by purchasing two of his pictures for the French National Gallery, the Luxembourg—a pastel, "Before the Storm," and an oil, "Grey Evening." He is represented in the collection of the city of Paris by a picture entitled "Under the Snow," and in the Melbourne gallery, Australia, by an English subject, "Banks of the Lyn," while the art collection of Colorado College is enriched by his picture, "The Storm Cloud."

His works have a world-wide reputation, and many are owned in the United States and Canada.

In 1890 Iwill became, after the split in the *Société des Artistes Français*, *sociétaire* of the *Société Nationale des*



VENICE

By M. J. Iwill

Collection of Leslie J. Skelton



BANKS OF THE LYN - DEVONSHIRE

By M. J. Iwill

Beaux Arts. He had just been awarded a silver medal at the Exposition of 1889, and other honors, and it was not without keen regret that he left his friends of the older society. His action quite unexpectedly involved a breaking of the long friendship with his master, Lansyer, who never forgave what he called his desertion, for he looked upon the younger society with much disfavor, and always alluded to it as "the hostile society."

The nomination of the Meissonier committee as *sociétaire* of



OCTOBER—WESTKAPELLE

By M. J. Iwill

the Société Nationale was, however, too important a thing to be refused, and Iwill felt compelled to separate himself from his many old associations and warm friends of the older society. In the new society Iwill at once took an enviable rank. His pictures have always been amongst the most noteworthy, both for their beauty of color and their effects of light and atmosphere. Every artist or layman who stands before one of his beautiful and vigorous canvases will acknowledge that he has fully mastered that greatest of all artistic difficulties, viz., "How to express his best thought in the way that best expresses it."

In every picture he is sincere and truthful to nature. He speaks his mind clearly in refined color and by correct drawing. Painting is surely as much a mode of expression as speech, and every time an artist takes brush or pencil in hand he records either what he thinks



or what he does not think; if the latter, he states what is not true, and is no more to be trusted than the man whose language is insincere. Iwill is, above all things, sincere, he loves landscape and paints it with a strong poetic sentiment, and he also shows great power in the selection of subjects. His paintings are full of light, and the very remarkable pastel entitled "Le Calvaire," in the last Salon, was the wonder and delight of the artistic world of Paris. The low hills far away, the houses and fishing-boats of the middle distance, the long



THE STORM CLOUD

By M. J. Iwill

Collection of Colorado College

stretch of wet sand in the foreground, the clouds with the gleam of light illuminating the figure of the Christ, the emblem of safety for the fishermen of the port of Etaples, etc.—these have all been carefully thought out and most admirably rendered. As a piece of technical work it is unique. It is a marvellous instance of light in a pastel painting, for it almost contains the strong light of nature.

Millet, the apostle of realism, has shown conclusively that everyday objects, the laborers who work in the fields, are capable of inspiring the most poetical feelings. Iwill, although painting very differently, has demonstrated this anew in his works. He has a refined and poetical mind, which even the most simple fact of nature cannot pass through without being made beautiful. He evidently feels, with



THE WRECKS

By M. J. Iwill

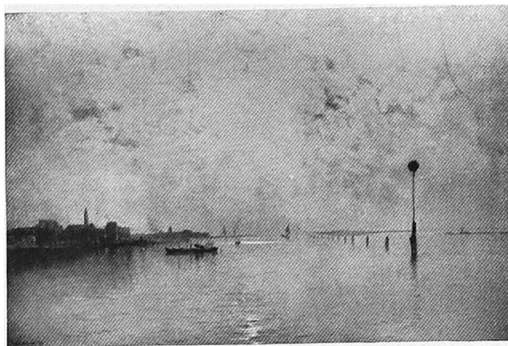
Collection of Leslie J. Skelton

Millet, that whatever appeals to his higher and stronger feelings is a legitimate subject for his brush.

Iwill has had a great many pupils of all nationalities—American, English, Swiss, German, and Russian. For some years, however, he has been obliged to discontinue teaching.

The demand for his pictures has been constantly growing, and pupils occupied too much of his time. He was wonderfully generous in the length of his lessons, and then could not be persuaded to accept a fair remuneration. He has frequently told a student, "Oh! never mind paying, I do not wish to make a commerce of my art."

During the years he did teach he gave much good counsel and advice, some of which has been recorded, and perhaps may explain better than anything else could do some of the underlying principles that govern his work. "Light is contained in the quality of tone more than in the thickness of pigment." "Simplicity is the highest form of art. It requires a highly refined and intelligent mind and a much more cultivated taste." "Every first-class painting will on examination be found to contain a considerable amount of detail. Alas! it is necessary, but it should never be obtrusive." "It is not easy to paint anything, but hardest of all is to give the impression of movement." "Always study your effects from nature. I have the greatest respect for anything, even the smallest sketch, made direct from nature." "Render your impressions of what you see and seek for everything that indicates or



VIEW OF VENICE

By M. J. Iwill



FIN DU JOUR—VENICE  
By M. J. Iwill



A POND IN THE DUNES  
By M. J. Iwill  
Collection of Leslie J. Skelto

suggests the beautiful contrasts of nature." The value of these dicta will be seen by all people of artistic training.

The motto of a great many of the best French landscape-painters has been, "*Mettez-vous en face de la nature et puis peignez comme vous sentirez.*" I will certainly advise his pupils to go to nature. He himself always does so, and he has been known to keep a picture unfinished for two or more years until he could revisit the scene to reconfirm his impressions.

In his own work he practices what he preaches. His palette is simple, and he has acquired by long study and practice a direct and straightforward method of execution. His pictures show great individuality of treatment and color. His wide range of subject is remarkable, for France, England, Holland, Italy, and Sicily are all equally well known to him and in each of these countries he seizes accurately the spirit, local coloring, and character. He is so rapid a worker that he is able to record the passing and transient effects of nature most readily, and he is also endowed with a fine critical sense which enables him to refine and elevate his work, and which also guides him to a noble choice of subject.

New ideas and methods he considers are manifestations to be carefully studied, not heresies to be refuted or condemned, for he is wide and liberal in his views.

LESLIE J. SKELTON.



QUAIS DE LA GUIDECCA—VENICE

By M. J. Iwill